

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to make the same request with respect to Executive Calendar No. 557, Donald Walker Tunnage, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for a term of fifteen years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to make the same request with respect to Executive Calendar No. 511, Susan Grundmann, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2025.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, it is my understanding that the next two nominees that I will bring forward have been cleared, and I would certainly urge my colleagues to support their confirmation.

The first is Michael Kubayanda, nominated to serve a second term on the Postal Regulatory Commission.

Mr. Kubayanda joined the Commission in January of 2019 after he was unanimously confirmed by the Senate during the last administration. Earlier this month, his nomination was reported from committee by a bipartisan vote.

I will say that he brings insight and expertise from decades of experience in both government and the private sector. During his tenure as Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Kubayanda has demonstrated his commitment to working in a bipartisan manner to make the Postal Service more effective and accountable.

I would urge my colleagues to join me in supporting his nomination.

Next, Mr. President, I would ask my colleagues to join me in confirming

Erik Hooks to be Deputy Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA.

The Deputy Administrator helps lead FEMA's work preparing for and responding to disasters, ranging from hurricanes to historic flooding and wildfires, to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Hooks has more than 30 years of public safety experience, including serving as secretary of public safety and homeland security advisor for the State of North Carolina, where his responsibilities included overseeing the State's emergency management agency.

I would urge my colleagues to join me in swiftly confirming Mr. Hooks to this important role as well.

So, Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar No. 558 and Calendar No. 555; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Michael Kubayanda, of Ohio, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission for a term expiring November 22, 2026 (Reappointment); and Erik Adrian Hooks, of North Carolina, to be Deputy Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

NOMINATION OF CHRIS MAGNUS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the Senate will soon vote on the nomination of Chief Chris Magnus to lead the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office, and I was very pleased that the Senate Finance Committee could advance this important nomination.

I want to give the Senate a brief assessment of why I think Chief Magnus is going to handle his job very well.

He brings a unique combination of smarts, common sense, and fairness, and that is really what this job is all about. For example, having talked to the chief at some length, he understands that strongly enforcing our immigration laws and treating immigrants and asylum seekers humanely are not mutually exclusive. You can do both. They are not incompatible. It is a perspective, in my view, on immigration that is going to help our communities, help public safety, and help our economy all at the same time.

Now, there is no doubt in my mind that Chief Magnus has the right qualifications for this position. He is highly experienced. He started out in Lansing, MI, and has headed up law enforcement agencies across the country—East, West, North, and South.

Currently, he serves as the chief of police in Tucson, AZ. That means we will have an individual leading Customs and Border Protection who starts on day 1—day 1—with firsthand knowledge about the challenges law enforcement on the southern border.

Even beyond that specific element of Customs and Border Protection's work, his range of experience in law enforcement all over the country makes him an ideal pick to lead an Agency with tens of thousands of employees, staffing more than 300 points of entry to our country.

So I think that is the heart of why he is going to be such a positive force with respect to border security, but I also want to note that on the Finance Committee, we are acutely aware that Customs and Border Protection is not just in the business of immigration; it is also on the frontlines of enforcing American trade laws. And too often in the past, that part of the mission has just gotten short shrift.

Today, Customs and Border Protection is the heart of the effort to fight against immoral and unfair trade practices, including the use of forced labor in China and elsewhere. Customs and Border Protection not only investigates forced labor and demands remediation where appropriate, it also enforces the ban on forced labor products entering our country.

Staying a step ahead of trade cheats, whether they are involved in forced labor or not, is key to protecting American jobs, our businesses, and innovation. Workers and businesses depend on healthy, functioning supply chains. We have certainly seen, since the beginning of the pandemic, that when the supply chains break down, you have enormous headaches throughout the economy, from the biggest businesses right down to individual families who are shopping this holiday season for typical holiday goods.

During his nomination hearing, Chief Magnus assured the Finance Committee that Customs and Border Protection's trade mission is going to get the focus and the resources it needs if he is confirmed. He has committed to ensuring that there is adequate staffing at our ports, and he is interested in improving the efficiency of our customs operations in a way that maintains key protections for consumer safety.

He is a first-rate nominee. It is clear he has got the right priorities when it comes to Customs and Border Protection challenges that many of our Senators care about most—securing the border and helping to get supply chains back to normal.

I believe that he is going to work with all of the Members of this body on

immigration and trade-related issues going forward in a way that brings Democrats and Republicans together. I am very happy to support him today.

And as our committee has spent the most time with the chief, I would like to say, as chairman of the committee, that I think he will reflect great credit on our country in a vital position, a position that comes up every day in activities across the land. He is the right person for this important job at the right time.

I urge all Senators to vote for Chief Magnus later today.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about an issue of vital importance involving the U.S. attorneys.

Each of the 93 U.S. attorneys serves as the chief Federal law enforcement officer within his or her jurisdiction. U.S. attorneys prosecute the full spectrum of criminal cases brought on behalf of the United States, from hate crimes to human trafficking, to gang violence, to cyber crime, to narcotics, to financial fraud, to terrorism. The list is long, and the violations of the law that are alleged are serious.

The position of the U.S. attorney is nearly as old as the Nation itself. In fact, the position has existed since the First Congress. President George Washington signed into law the law that created these attorneys in the Judiciary Act of 1789.

Given the critical role that these U.S. attorneys play in bringing justice to those who violate Federal criminal laws, it is hard to imagine that any Member of this body would obstruct efforts to confirm these law enforcement officials. Doing so could threaten public safety and puts at risk millions of Americans' security.

It is also a stark departure from what has happened before. The last time the Senate required a rollcall vote on a U.S. attorney nominee was 1975. Forty-six years have passed without the request for a rollcall vote on a U.S. attorney. For decades, the Senate has confirmed U.S. attorneys by a voice vote or unanimous consent after they have been considered in the Judiciary Committee.

Listen to this: During the Trump administration, 85 of President Trump's U.S. attorney nominees moved through the Judiciary Committee in the Senate. Of those 85, the Senate confirmed every single Trump nominee by unanimous consent without even requesting a record vote. I might add just for the

record, I believe one nominee was held for 1 week so that a question could be answered about his background. That is the only thing that I can recall where they even slowed down the process during the Trump administration. Certainly, it was within our power as Democrats to stop and require a vote, but we didn't. Yet now there is a Republican objection to holding a voice vote on five U.S. attorney nominees: Greg Harris for the Central District of Illinois, Clare Connors for Hawaii, Zachary Cunha for Rhode Island, Nikolas Kerest for Vermont, and Philip Sellinger for New Jersey.

Several of these nominees have been held up for weeks—weeks—by this objection. Why, you ask, is there an objection to these five nominees? There must be something wrong with their records. Well, let's take a look.

Greg Harris is a personal friend of mine. I practiced law with him in Springfield, IL. He spent nearly three decades as assistant U.S. attorney in the Central District of Illinois. That includes my hometown. He has tried over 50 cases to verdict and held a number of leadership positions in the U.S. Attorney's Office. He serves on the Central Illinois Human Trafficking Task Force and the Bankruptcy Fraud Working Group.

His nomination is historic. He will be the first African-American U.S. attorney in the Central District of Illinois, which, of course, is located in Mr. Lincoln's hometown of Springfield—the first.

Clare Connors is currently the attorney general of Hawaii. Ms. Connors previously served as criminal prosecutor in the Justice Department's Tax Division, special assistant U.S. attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia, and for nearly 7 years an assistant U.S. attorney in Hawaii.

Zachary Cunha, currently an assistant U.S. attorney in the District of Rhode Island in the same office he will lead upon confirmation—he has worked there for 8 years, following time as an assistant U.S. attorney in both the Eastern District of New York and the District of Massachusetts.

Nikolas Kerest, also an assistant U.S. attorney, served in the District of Vermont since 2010, following time in private legal practice in Maine and Massachusetts and a clerkship on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.

Philip Sellinger has had a long and distinguished legal career in New Jersey. He began his legal career as a law clerk for Judge Anne Thompson of the District of New Jersey before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office in Newark. For the past two decades, Mr. Sellinger has been a litigator in a prominent law firm and even served as the firm's co-chair of global litigation.

Listen to these biographies. All five of these nominees are eminently qualified to hold the office of U.S. attorney, to prosecute crimes and bring civil actions on behalf of the government, and to help safeguard our communities across America.

There is one thing that all of these U.S. attorney nominees have in common, though. They are all from States with two Democratic Senators. That seems to be the only thing that they might have in common. The objections to these nominees are not that they aren't qualified or that the job is not important; the objection seems to be that they are from States with two Democratic Senators.

So when it comes to critical issues we expect, in the Department of Justice, to be taken care of by U.S. attorneys—issues involving terrorism, human trafficking, narcotics, public corruption, gun violence, the safety of our communities—is the fact that they happen to hail from States with two Democratic Senators enough to disqualify them or to leave these positions vacant?

It is time to end the Republican delay and get these well-qualified prosecutors confirmed and on the job.

We never once during the Trump administration's 4 years held up a U.S. attorney when it came to a voice vote, a unanimous voice vote, to give them the opportunity to serve this country. It is unthinkable that we are going to do this to these fine men and women today. So, today, I will ask unanimous consent for a vote on these nominees.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 534, 535, 536, 581, and 582; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object.

The Senate is a special institution. It is a unique institution. James Madison said the Senate was the only truly innovative part of our Constitution.

It remains the case today that our Senate is the only upper Chamber in a Western parliament that has more power under our Constitution than does the lower Chamber. That is in part because of the design of the Senate in our Constitution; because of our Senate rules, of our traditions, of our customs.

We have heard a lot about courtesy and collegiality and respect. Those are very important customs around here, but it has to be a two-way street.

Earlier this year, in the Judiciary Committee, during the markup for Vanita Gupta to be Associate Attorney General, I was speaking, as is my right under the Judiciary Committee rules. There was at least one other Republican Senator who was preparing to speak. There may have been more. The Senator from Illinois, in his role as